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Atari Online News, Etc.
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~ New EtherNEC Hardware! ~ 'Dot-usa' Fee Refunds! ~ New Form of Spam!
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->From the Editor's Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"
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The weather around here has been abominable this past week or so. Wet and cold has been the norm. But, it may be improving as we saw the sun today, for the first time in many days. Maybe I'll get an opportunity to get the lawn mowed before it reaches "meadow" classification! We had a minor frost the other night, but most of my vegetables survived. However, it won't be long now before a hearty frost finishes them off. I may get another batch of ripe tomatoes yet!

It's been one of those weeks again. Maybe it was amplified by the weather but the mood at work has been strained. Everyone appears to be more and more stressed out lately. Not good for a major hospital! Probably the typical over-worked and under-paid syndrome, but that's the norm these days. It's unfortunate that the general workforce is faced with that situation, but there's not a lot one can do about it unless willing to change careers and hope it's a better one. I just thought - it sounds like the last days of Atari and the decision many of us Atari users had to make - stick with Atari computers or move on and hope for the best. Ironical, but many of us stayed with Atari but added another platform in the hopes of having the best of both worlds! It seemed to have worked for the moment!

We have an interesting issue this week with a number of ironic articles for your reading pleasure. A major decision with regard to future MacWorld shows; Microsoft blows it, again!; a soft-porn video game gets shunned; and a lot more! I hope you enjoy reading.

Until next time...

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ARAnyM Is The Fastest TOS Clone Now

ARAnyM 0.6.6 has just been released. This new version offers the JIT (just-in-time) compiler for our CPU that converts the m68k instructions to i386 instructions on-the-fly (similarly to what JAVA VM does). This causes up to 10x faster execution of m68k code on i386 host platform.

Visit the ARAnyM web pages for more information, download or the

screenshots section that clearly shows the immense power of GEM applications running on the right TOS machine.

<http://aranyM.sf.net/>

New ARAnyM WWW Pages

Completely reworked WWW pages, now based on CSS2, offer new and up-to-date information about ARAnyM, its current status and progress. Especially enjoy the new screenshots...

<http://aranyM.sf.net>

Behind the Scenes of the Atari Coldfire Project

There is an article about the work of the Atari Coldfire Project available at the website: <http://acp.atari.org>

It covers the progress of the project and features insights of the work of ACP. Additionally, there is a discussion about the 'Wilhelm'-board, that was mentioned some time ago.

Have fun while reading!

NetBSD 1.6 Released

NetBSD 1.6 has been released. It contains support for large variety of hardware platforms, including Atari (and Atari clones)

<http://www.netbsd.org>

EtherNEC Hardware

Lyndon Amsdon has announced:

I have more stock of EtherNEC after the recent delays over summer. EtherNEC is an adaptor to connect an ISA network card to the ROM port (cartridge port) of every 16/32 Atari (ST, TT, Falcon). On accelerated Falcons speeds of up to 400kbytes/sec have been reported. Please see:

<http://hardware.atari.org>

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING
compiled by Joe Mirando
joe@atarinews.org

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. It's been yet another hectic week here in the rat's maze, and the weekend is looking pretty good right about now. I don't know about you, but I find myself looking forward to weekends more and more these days.

It's not like I do anything special on the weekends, but it's MY time. Y'know what I mean? It gives me time to catch up on the things that I have to put off during the week and, over and above that, gives me time to just "veg" out.

I'm one of those people who just likes to take some time to think about a bunch of miscellaneous things for no reason in particular. You know... a lay-about. <grin>

Last weekend, I read an article on the internet about how the line between the "have's" and the "have-not's" is changing. The story itself was dry and fairly uninteresting to anyone who has actually LOOKED at the way things are out there, but it got me to thinking about the line between computer users and non-computer users.

In my "day job", I teach employees to use computers for database entry, shipping and receiving, inventory control, and several other things. I've found that there are only two types of people... those who are willing to learn to use the computer, and those who aren't.

I've been fascinated by computers ever since I saw my first episode of STAR TREK (the one with the original Enterprise: NCC-1701. No bloody A, no bloody B, no bloody C, no bloody D).

The idea of a machine that was capable of figuring things out and actually telling you about it amazed me. When affordable computers actually became available, I jumped in and bought one. Sure, it wasn't capable of talking or even doing anything really complex, but it was a start. And I was more impressed by what it COULD do than I was disappointed by what it couldn't.

So I simply can't understand the mindset of someone who doesn't want to learn about computers. I'm not talking about people who are afraid of them. Those people can lose their fears... usually within a few minutes, if given a chance and some encouragement. Rather, I'm talking about those who just don't want to deal with computers at all. It occurred to me that this very division is what is becoming the next cultural divide.

I can remember back when I was in junior high school and one of the nuns (yes, I went to a catholic school) constantly referred to eastern europeans, south americans, africans... heck, everyone who wasn't north american... as "backward people".

I always chalked that up to either arrogance or ignorance, but more and more these days, I think it's the same division that people have seen since time began. The have's and the have-not's.

This time, the dividing line isn't on a map, it's not one of those neatly colored boundaries, and it's got nothing to do with religion or ethnicity. It might even warrant a change in the name... It may come to

be known as the divide between the users and the non-users. I find it somewhat troubling that a piece of technology that has such great potential to bring people together will help to keep them apart.

Well, let's get to the news, hints, tips, and info from the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup
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'Mark' asks about a particular hard drive:

"I got a Seagate Barracuda 4.3 HD on ebay and I can't get HD Driver to "see" it on my system. It is a fast and wide SCSI HD which I believe is also called SCSI 3? Anyway I got an adapter to make it connect to a 50 pin cable and put the HD in my SCSI external case, which is connected by another cable that is SCSI 1 on one end and SCSI 2 on the other. Could it be a problem with all these different SCSI standards, or does HD driver support SCSI 3? I'm using HD driver 7.6. "

Dr. Uwe Seimet, author of HD Driver, tells Mark:

"Yes, HDDRIVER supports SCSI-3. Have you already tried the current demo version 8.1 of HDDRIVER. There were numerous changes wrt to SCSI since version 7.6.

Ensure that your adapter **actively** terminates the unused upper 8 data lines of your cable."

Derryck Croker tells Mark:

"I went through this (on a Mac as it happens). I thought that it was the adaptor's responsibility to configure the drive (in this case a 68 pin job) to the right configuration for an 8 bit data bus, single-ended but had to grab the manufacturer's data sheet and a few jumpers and do it myself.

There's no reason to suspect the various standards you/we have."

Rod Smith adds:

"You might need to do a low-level format on the drive and set various parameters (particularly the sector size) correctly. I got a ~4GB SCSI disk off of eBay a few months ago, and it had been used in a UNIX system that set a peculiar sector size. It wouldn't work in my TT until I forced a low-level format with a reset of the sector size to the standard 512 bytes. I don't recall what I used to do this, but I think it was an old DOS utility (I used an x86 box to do the reformat)."

Uwe tells Rod:

"If a drive is not "seen" it has definitely nothing to do with the sector size. The physical sector size is only relevant when trying to read/write data. If a drive is not recognized it's a hardware-related problem, usually wrong termination or bad cables. You are not able to format a drive that is not "seen", by the way. "

Brian Roland adds:

"I'm waiting on an adaptor to try one of these drives on my Falcon.

ST34572W. It should work....

1. What computer are you trying to connect it with? Falcon?
2. Check the jumper settings carefully...be sure you've a non conflicting address jumper set.
3. Check the Termination Power and Termination jumper settings. Some atari scsi hosts do not supply termination power properly, or at all. In such cases you'll want to have one SCSI device on the bus supply term power to itself, and to the rest of the bus. You only want the last device in the SCSI chain terminated.
4. Open HDDriver Utility and scan for drive ID, if it is showing up there, but not on the list when you boot, then you've simply forgotten a setting in HDDriver. Find the dialog where you tell HDDriver what SCSI ID's to scan and make sure the drive ID is active.
5. If still no luck...try to find another computer somewhere to test the drive. If nothing can recognize it...maybe it's a bad drive. Given the age of that model of hard drive...there is a VERY GOOD chance it is still under Seagate Warranty (free repair if it's bad).

Do let us know if you get it working...I'm hoping to get one of these to work on my Falcon."

Brian then gets all the pieces together and posts this:

"Just today I installed one of these Barracuda Wide SCSI drives on my Atari Falcon...

I did have some troubles getting it recognized...

I also have a Barracuda ST32550N 2.1gig (NOT Wide) drive on the bus..

I finally got the Ultra Wide ST34572W to be recognized like so:

I have a Falcon with the mini SCSI II cable going to a SCSI I type chassis just like you described.

1. I had the other drive [ST32550N] provide TERM POWER to the BUS, AND to the drive and made sure this first drive in my chain is NOT terminated.
2. I then set the Wide SCSI drive (with adaptor) to get its term power from the SCSI bus.
3. I put a termination block on the end of the SCSI chain. If you don't have an external termination block...make sure the last SCSI device in the chain is terminated.

In essence...it seems like the Wide drive does not like something about the Falcon's termination power (if it provides it at all?).

Having another device on the SCSI bus provide this seems to have fixed it. If you don't have another SCSI device to do this with...try experimenting with the various termination jumper settings on the hard drive.

If that doesn't help, ask on the news groups...there's a way to pull termination power from an external power source (such as the joystick port) if needed...people used to do this with the old ICD adaptors for ST

machines and zip drives that do not provide their own termination power."

Jim DeClercq asks about printing to his SLM printer:

"I am missing something simple.

I use TeX for several things, and DVISLM.TTP does nothing but print a blank page. The DVI file is fine, and there is a work-around. I print to file as a lj file, and use MagicSLM to go from there to my SLM804.

I am using the CS_TEX_4.0 distribution, and whatever is in it I have.

Does anyone have a working copy of DVISLM, or a working setup that will print to an SLM804?

Or, what simple thing am I missing?"

Adam Klobukowski tells Jim:

"You can try converting DVI file to PS or PDF and then use GemGhostscript."

Bill Kendrick asks for info about the 1040:

"Well, apparently there was an Atari 1040STf lying around the office I just moved into, and since it wasn't claimed before the last tenants moved out, and obviously wasn't used by them for work, my bosses here said to themselves "hey, Bill's into Atari's - we can give it to him!"

So, I'm now the proud owner of an Atari 1040STf (minus the up-arrow and keypad-zero keycaps, and E and D keys which don't stay on very well).

I have no idea if it works - I found a spare power cord (looks to use the standard type used in today's monitors & PCs), and it appeared to power up.

But, I have no monitor here at work that it could talk to (and no cable), and looking at the DIN plug on the back, I seriously doubt the cable I'm using on my Atari 800XL (with Commodore 1902 monitor) will fit the bill.

My first question is:

What's the best/cheapest place to get a monitor cable, and what kind of monitors can it connect to? (e.g., can I use that Commodore 1902 monitor?)

What's the best way to get files to/from this puppy? I've got a Linux box at home and at work, and I seem to recall the ST line using "MSDOS" style floppy disks, so I suppose I can just use 3.5" disks... Is there any kind of ethernet adapter for it, or something?"

David Wade tells Bill:

"The Atari produces analogue RGB at "normal" TV style frequencies. So depending on the original country this will either be at 50Hz or 60hz,. depending on the dominant standard. You can switch between the two with a boot floppy but most suitable monitors will sync to either. Some models (STFM and STE) had a built in TV modulator and these have composite video in addition to RGB. You can tell these models as they have an additional

RCA jack on the back for feeding the TV aerial socket. As its an STf I assume it has no TV modulator, and so no composite, so it won't work with the 1902, which from the web appears to need TTL or Composite.

If its real old it probably has a single sided drive in it, so it won't read PC format drives. If it has a double sided drive it will read and write "standard" 720k (i.e. none high density). The OS is usually in ROM so once you have a display you will get a "GEM" desktop and you should be able to format disks. If it will format a double sided it will read 720k PC disks.

As it has no hard drive ethernet is not much use. If you get a hard drive the hardware.atari.org has one solution which I also use, but the ISA Realtech NE2000 clone cards it needs are getting harder to find at junk sales.

Brian Roland adds:

"It's possible to hook it to a VGA for the monochrome mode.
Ask around..I'm sure some of the Atari shops will build you a cable.

To get files to the ST...get a box of Double Density disks...or if you can't find any, tape the hole of some HD ones. Format them on your PeeCee. If the ST turns out to have a single sided drive...then use MSDOS to format it single sided on your PC. You should be able to move the disk(s) to and fro then. You might also check popular Atari Emulation sites...as there are quite a few utilities for moving "disk images" about.

Yes...there are at least 3 ethernet solutions, though you'll need a multitasking OS (and enough memory to run it). One of the ethernet solutions requires a relatively modern SCSI host adaptor. In any case...a hard disk would be nice..."

Sam Smith asks about the status of an Atari 'clone':

"Just a quick question - What happened to the Milan? What is (or rather was) the 'Ultimate' Atari ST?"

Lonny Pursell tells Sam:

"If you refer to obtainable, I'd say the Hades060, but since I have one. I'm biased.

The Milan is a fine machine though, the 040 version can be upgraded to an 060. I won't bother to speak of unreleased things, only time will tell."

Martin Tarenskeen posts this about HighWire:

"This day I was browsing the net accidentally(!) using Highwire ONLINE. I didn't even know it was already possible to use it online ! It's not quite ready yet completely for serious online use, but it was a nice surprise for me anyway."

Mark Duckworth tells Martin:

"Though I haven't been following the highwire list, the online functionality simply isn't done quite properly yet last time I checked. Probably someone accidentally left the initial online functionality

Well folks, that's it for this time around. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - Xbox To Be Bundled With Two Games!
    "*****"                    Retailers Shun "BMX XXX" Game!
                                   Acclaim Cries Foul!
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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News    -   The Latest Gaming News!
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Microsoft to Offer Xbox Bundled with Two Games

Microsoft Corp. on Monday said it would offer its Xbox console bundled with two games from Japanese publisher Sega Corp., an effective discount aimed at more price-conscious game buyers.

The package will sell for the same \$199 price the console alone currently sells for, which Microsoft said translates into a savings of about \$100.

"Now that everyone's in the second year of their console life -- Sony being in the third -- you're going after a broader audience," John O'Rourke, director of Xbox marketing for Microsoft, told Reuters. "What matters more to a casual gamer, or a gift giver, is value."

Microsoft's Xbox and Nintendo Co. Ltd.'s GameCube both came out in November of last year, while Sony Corp.'s market-leading PlayStation 2 came out in late 2000.

Nintendo is also set to offer a bundle this holiday season, including a copy of "Super Mario Sunshine" and an extra external memory card with the GameCube, though that package will sell for \$189.95, compared with the GameCube's regular \$149 price.

The two games to be included in the Xbox bundle are skateboarding and

action game "Jet Set Radio Future" and auto racing title "Sega GT 2002."

The bundle will also come with a smaller version of the Xbox's control pad, which has previously been available separately.

O'Rourke said he expects most retailers will offer only the Xbox bundle and not stand-alone Xboxes without the extra games and the smaller controller.

Retailers Shun New Acclaim 'XXX' Game

Three of the nation's top retailers, including Wal Mart, on Monday said they had refused to carry a new video game billed as the first major release to feature full-action nudity and with prostitutes and pimps as major characters.

Using the tagline "Keep it Dirty," video game publisher Acclaim Entertainment Inc. is gearing up for the Nov. 19 launch of "BMX XXX," a game that also features copulating pink poodles and a variety of racing bike stunts.

But major retailers Wal-Mart Stores Inc., Toys R Us Inc. and KB Toys all said they would not carry the game, a potential blow for the game's exposure.

"We're not going to carry any software with any vulgarity or nudity - we're just not going to do it," Wal-Mart spokesman Tom Williams told Reuters.

However, Best Buy Co. Inc. said it intended to sell a censored version of the game for Sony's PlayStation 2.

Acclaim Chief Executive Gregory Fischbach told Reuters the critics were being unfair and missing the point of the game, which he said was intended as a kind of spoof along the lines of movie comedies such as "Austin Powers" and "Airplane."

A promotional video clip first bills "BMX XXX" as a "game of cultural sophistication and artistic aspiration" then launches into a hard-rocking montage of clips, including bike tricks and shots of strippers in action. The video ends with the admonition: "We're going to hell for this and you're all coming with us."

"I still believe that we'll get substantially full distribution in the United States," Fischbach said. "I don't really think it goes much further than some other video games on the marketplace."

He added, "I think the game stands on its own and I think that ... we have no intent to change the content of the game."

Glen Cove, New York-based Acclaim wants the title to be a hit and reverse its sliding fortunes the way that "Grand Theft Auto 3" did for Take-Two Interactive Software Inc.

"GTA 3," which like "BMX" carries a "Mature" rating from the Entertainment Software Review Board, featured controversial scenes of violence but went on to become the top-selling video game of 2001.

While "GTA 3" was exclusive to Sony Corp.'s PlayStation 2, Acclaim has a

broader strategy for "BMX," with releases planned for the PS2, Microsoft Corp.'s Xbox and Nintendo Co. Ltd.'s GameCube.

Fischbach said there has been no decision yet on changes to the Sony version, though he said if Sony asked for changes Acclaim would make them. He added that any changes would not affect the game's release date.

A Nintendo spokeswoman said the company had not asked for any changes for the GameCube version. A Microsoft spokeswoman was not immediately available for comment.

Since Oct. 1, shares in Acclaim have gained nearly 12 percent, the best performance among the listed U.S. video game publishers. Even so, the stock, which rose 13-fold in 2001, is off nearly 77 percent this year and down 41 percent since a Sept. 19 profit warning.

That warning jarred investors at a time when most video game companies expect to post record profits and sales. Acclaim warned of a fiscal fourth-quarter loss of up to 13 cents, compared with the 13-cent profit analysts polled by Thomson First Call had on average had expected. As a result, many analysts cut their ratings and estimates on the stock.

Besides "BMX," Acclaim had bet its holiday season on the games "Turok: Evolution," "Aggressive Inline" and "Vexx." But both "Turok" and "Inline" were major sales disappointments, and Vexx has been postponed into 2003.

"BMX XXX" will also compete with "Grand Theft Auto: Vice City," the follow-on to "GTA 3" and an expected top seller in its own right. The marketing for "Vice City" has also relied heavily on images of near-naked women and thuggish men.

"What we're doing here is funny," Fischbach said. "The people that we're selling to are the people who bought 'Grand Theft Auto.'"

Acclaim: Critics Unfair in Blasting 'XXX' Game

Shunned by retailers for a video game featuring prostitutes and pimps, Acclaim Entertainment Inc. on Thursday said the controversial game was being unfairly held to a different standard than mainstream media.

"BMX XXX," which will carry a "Mature" rating as assigned by the Entertainment Software Rating Board, features scantily-clad prostitutes, pimps in outrageous clothing and copulating dogs, and carries the tagline "Keep It Dirty."

Glen Cove, New York-based Acclaim is scheduled to release the game on Nov. 19 for Sony Corp.'s PlayStation 2, Microsoft Corp.'s Xbox and Nintendo Co. Ltd.'s GameCube game consoles.

Retailers Wal-Mart Stores Inc., Toys R Us Inc., KB Toys, Best Buy Co. Inc. and Circuit City Stores Inc. all said this week they would not carry the game.

The Parents Television Council, a group that usually condemns what it sees as inappropriate TV programming, issued a statement Thursday praising retailers for refusing to stock the game.

But Acclaim countered with an unusual statement arguing that its game had been misunderstood.

"We believe that there is a general, unfair characterization of the interactive entertainment industry and as a result, our product is being held to an entirely different standard than other entertainment media with comparable content, including movies, television and radio," Acclaim Chief Executive Greg Fischbach said in a statement.

In its statement, Acclaim cited statistics from research firm NPD Group showing that 60 percent of people who own advanced game consoles are men over 18, which it said demonstrates the potential audience for the title.

In its statement Acclaim compared the game with edgy but popular TV shows like "The Sopranos" and "Sex and the City" and teen comedy "American Pie."

"While we acknowledge that we are setting new benchmarks with BMX XXX, we are disappointed that there are groups who fail to see how this humorous product is truly on par with such widely accepted mainstream entertainment experiences," Fischbach said.

Earlier this week, Fischbach told Reuters he believed most retailers would change their position on stocking the game once they had actually seen it.

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

AOL, MSN at It Again with Dueling Launches

America Online is putting on its gloves again to defend its title as the No. 1 Web services provider, entering the ring with its new Internet service roughly a week before MSN launches its newest challenge.

Maintaining its leadership is one of the many tasks at hand for the Internet arm of AOL Time Warner Inc., which has been hit by the sharp ad slump and federal probes into the unit's accounting, analysts said.

The latest version of its service, which is being launched on Tuesday, has been billed as one of the company's biggest upgrades and as a key step in reviving the online giant. But its nearest rival, Microsoft Corp.'s MSN, which is a distant No. 2 to AOL with 9 million subscribers, unveiled an aggressive \$300 million marketing campaign to promote its newest version. AOL has 35 million subscribers worldwide and 26.5 million in the United States.

"It's the next stage of the portal wars that were all about which retailer I can get. Now it's about which consumers I can get," Forrester analyst Charlene Li said.

Analysts said they received invitations to AOL's and MSN's star-studded

launches within days of each other, fueling the battle between the two rivals that started in the 1990s.

Rock star Alanis Morissette and comedian Dana Carvey will help company executives, including Chairman Steve Case and Chief Executive Richard Parsons, launch AOL 8.0 in New York on Tuesday. AOL plans to spend more than \$100 million on promoting the version, its biggest in several years.

MSN, of course, has its own plans. Rock star Lenny Kravitz will kick off MSN's launch on Oct. 24 in New York's Central Park. For the first time, Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates will be on hand for an MSN launch. They may also unveil new partners at the event.

"If you think of it as a slug fest, AOL is a defender. MSN is a strong contender and then we have Yahoo on the side saying, 'We want to get in there,'" Li said.

Last month, Yahoo Inc. unveiled its new high-speed access service with SBC Communications, the No. 2 local U.S. telephone carrier. Yahoo is betting it will benefit from its status as neither a software company nor a media giant.

AOL executives have acknowledged the world's largest Internet service provider took its eye off the ball, focusing more on things like ad sales after its merger rather than the service. AOL 8.0 is seen as key in their turnaround plan as it tries to get the unit back on track.

Last month, the company said 2002 earnings and revenue at the online unit would miss expectations, citing the ad slump. Some analysts have wondered if it will also have to rein in 2003 expectations.

Analysts said the emerging high-speed, or broadband, world offers rivals a chance to catch up and turn the tables on AOL. Merrill Lynch analyst Jessica Reif Cohen last week warned that falling subscribers could also become AOL's next problem and said its move into broadband could be a costly one.

"It is a very important time for us to get the word out," said Bob Visse, director of MSN marketing. "When customers on AOL are making this decision of whether they upgrade to AOL 8.0 or look into another ISP or move to broadband -- when they make that decision, we want to be there as a clear alternative."

MSN is spending \$300 million to get the word out -- a hefty sum but less than the \$1 billion it spent in 2000 when it offered \$400 rebates. While subscriber growth slowed after it ended the rebate, MSN has gained market share, analysts said.

"MSN has spent more than \$1 billion since 2000 in marketing efforts against AOL, but AOL has outgrown MSN by 8 million net new subscribers over that time," AOL spokesman Andrew Weinstein said. "We have always focused on members, not competition. Some of our competitors have been trying to imitate AOL for years."

GigaMedia analyst Rob Enderle said Microsoft and MSN often outspend their rivals in launches and this time the spending is likely "several magnitudes" of what AOL would spend.

"In the face of the huge spin by Microsoft, it's awfully hard to build momentum," Enderle added. "AOL -- largely as a result of merger and focus

on other things -- has taken its eye off the ball and MSN has taken that ball and run with it."

Analysts said MSN has better prepared for broadband and has targeted some of AOL's strengths --such as parental controls.

AOL has fine-tuned its service and unveiled about 100 changes that build on its strengths, including community and chat and improved junk mail tools, for example, analysts said.

"This is the biggest single release from that perspective; there are a broad range of changes that upgrade the whole experience," said David Gang, head of AOL product development.

Despite the improvements in both services, Jupiter Research analyst David Card said neither was going to revolutionize the market.

"The only way to juice up the subscription business is to take a major pricing action, either cutting prices or bundling so much in, or to jump on the broadband bandwagon," Card said. "But I don't think there is enough to jump-start the market or take significant market share from each other."

Macworld Leaving Big Apple; Apple Bitter

Can Macworld exist without the help of big Apple?

That was the question on Macintosh users' minds on Thursday after a bitter Apple Computer Corp. said it would not participate in the huge trade show when it comes to Boston in 2004.

Macworld organizer IDG World Expo announced earlier in the day what had been rumored for weeks: that it had struck a deal with Boston authorities to bring the trade show back to Massachusetts in July 2004.

But within two hours of IDG's announcement, Apple said in a terse statement that it was not pleased with the move.

"Apple disagrees with this decision, and will not be participating in Macworld Boston," Apple said, declining to comment on the reason for its disagreement.

The Cupertino, California-based computer company also said it would rethink its participation in next year's New York Macworld.

"Since IDG is no longer investing in New York, we now need to re-evaluate our participation in Macworld New York 2003. Apple will continue to participate in Macworld San Francisco in January," Apple said.

IDG said it had kept Apple informed of the plan to move Macworld to Boston and that it could "only speculate" about the company's objections.

Macworld takes place twice a year, with one show in San Francisco. The shows typically feature an appearance by Apple founder and Chief Executive Steve Jobs, who enthralles Mac users with a display of the latest products.

Macworld left Boston for New York in 1998 after outgrowing the city's

available convention space. IDG said the trade show's return to Massachusetts was expected to bring at least \$40 million to Boston.

IDG: Macworld Expo Will Go On As Planned

Ending weeks of speculation, IDG World Expo announced on Thursday that they would move the East Coast Macworld from New York to Boston in 2004. Despite a statement given to MacCentral earlier from Apple saying they didn't agree with the move and would not attend the show, IDG said the shows in New York and Boston would go on as planned.

"We are going to produce Macworld New York in July 2003 and we are going to produce Macworld Boston in July 2004," Charlie Greco, IDG World Expo president and CEO, told MacCentral in an interview from Boston. "We would love to have Apple participate in those events as they have for 18 straight years, but if for reasons unknown to us they decide not to come, we will go with 250 exhibitors instead of 251 exhibitors."

Greco said he did speak with officials from Apple today about the company's statement and their plans for future shows, but said nothing has been resolved yet. The two companies plan to meet again next week to continue discussing Apple's participation in future shows -- Greco said he was hopeful the situation could be resolved, but IDG was not going to change their plans.

"We don't plan to lower a single room block or cut any of the commitments we've made to the city of Boston," said Greco. "We're moving forward; we believe we have a hit on our hands in the city of Boston."

Since Apple's statement saying they wouldn't attend a Macworld in Boston, Greco said he has received a lot of support from other developers that like the move to Boston. The message developers are giving him is that they will go to Boston whether Apple goes or not, according to Greco.

"We have an obligation to the Mac community on the East Coast to give the people that have been very loyal to the Mac platform a place to go so they can network, look at products and services, and see the other 250 exhibitors," Greco said.

Apple's statement earlier today indicated that the company was also re-evaluating the New York Expo next summer, but reaffirmed its commitment to the San Francisco show in January.

Contacted earlier today, an IDG representative was surprised by Apple's position and said the two companies had been in close contact throughout the negotiation process to bring the show to Boston.

Intel Remains Mum on Pentium 4 Successor

A senior Intel executive confirmed Tuesday that the company is working on a project code-named Nehalem but would not comment on details of the project or whether the code name refers to a successor for the company's Pentium 4 processor.

Nehalem was first mentioned in an interview with Intel engineer Doug Carmean posted on--and later removed from--Intel's Web site. In that interview, Carmean said that Nehalem was a chip based on a new architecture that is different from the Pentium 4 and would likely begin shipping in 2004. That has led to speculation among some observers that Nehalem could be a successor to the Pentium 4.

"Nehalem is a fine word that people have tried to associate things to, but we won't comment on it," said Louis Burns, vice president and co-general manager of Intel's Desktop Platforms Group, speaking to the press at the Intel Developer Forum here. "It's out in the future; we'll just leave it at that."

Whatever Nehalem may be, Intel sees plenty of performance headroom left in the Pentium 4 architecture and plans to develop additional chips based on that design.

In 2003, the company plans to release an updated version of the Pentium 4, code-named Prescott, which will be produced using a 90-nanometer process and incorporate several improvements over existing Pentium 4 models, Burns said.

Prescott will not be the last Pentium 4 chip, Burns said.

"We will continue to enhance and improve the [Pentium 4] architecture and, like I said, there's certainly nothing to say about Nehalem," he said.

AOL to Stop Most Web Pop-Up Ads

In a bid to make its customers happy, America Online Inc. is eliminating those annoying pop-up ads - for the most part.

"This new policy will contribute to our most important goal - a better member experience," said Jon Miller, America Online's chairman and chief executive. "By ending third-party pop-ups and merchandise sales we are giving our members what they want."

The announcement Tuesday to no longer accept pop-up advertising coincided with the launch of the latest version of AOL software.

The new policy will take effect as the company works through the inventory of ads and merchandise promotions it is already committed to run.

However, AOL said it will continue to use pop-ups to notify members about key features of its service, and on a limited basis, to advertise special offers from parent company AOL Time Warner Inc.

America Online introduced version 8.0 of its Internet software, which offers new services, including improved junk e-mail blockers and exclusive content.

New Pop-Up Ads Bypass the Internet

As if junk e-mail and pop-up ads weren't annoying enough on their own, now there's a combination.

A developer of bulk-mail software has figured out how to blast computers with pop-up spam over the Internet through a messaging function on many Windows operating systems. The function was designed for use by computer network technicians to, for instance, warn people on their systems of a planned shutdown.

The pop-up messages appear on recipients' computers in separate windows, similar to pop-up ads that appear when a user goes to a Web site.

But there's a difference: Anyone can send the messages, and there's no need for the user to have an Internet browser open.

Gary Flynn, a security engineer at James Madison University, where several messages were received, calls the technique worse than e-mail spam.

"This pops up on the screen," he said. "It's almost like somebody barging in your office and interrupting you."

Zoltan Kovacs, founder of the company that makes the new software, officially condemns spamming but acknowledges that some customers buy it for that.

"If some people use it for bad things, they should take their own responsibility, but it's their own problem," Kovacs said.

He said his tool can help system administrators send alert notices to network users more efficiently.

However, his Web site touts the software's advertising and marketing potential. He said he has sold more than 200 copies since his \$699.99 product was released two months ago.

The new spam technique, first reported by Wired.com, represents the latest attempt to bypass the increasingly sophisticated e-mail spam filters employed by leading Internet service providers and individual users.

It also circumvents state and other laws designed to curb junk e-mail, Kovacs said.

Kovacs said his company is based in Romania. A demo copy of the software contains a Plantation, Fla., address, but he said that was old. Kovacs refused to discuss his location, other than saying he is in the United States.

In recent weeks, Internet users have reported receiving pop-up messages such as one touting university degrees without classes or books.

Security firm myNetWatchman.com, which monitors some 1,400 computer networks worldwide, also detected unsolicited connection attempts of the pattern used by Kovacs' software, DirectAdvertiser.

Unlike e-mail, recipients can only receive messages if their computers are on while the messages are being sent. And the software can only send text - not images or clickable links as are found in pop-up ads and e-mail.

The software itself does not hack into computers. Rather, it uses the Messenger service that comes turned on by default with many Windows

systems, including 2000 and XP, said Philip Sloss, an independent security consultant in San Diego.

Messenger, not to be confused with the MSN Messenger instant-messaging program, is meant for system administrators to broadcast service notices.

But if a system administrator can use Messenger, so can someone connecting through the Internet from the outside, said Lawrence Baldwin, president of myNetWatchman.com.

Flynn worries that hackers might one day use the technique to persuade users to change their passwords or otherwise compromise security.

The DirectAdvertiser software finds Messenger-enabled computers by running through ranges of numeric Internet Protocol addresses used to identify computers on the Internet.

The software, however, may not work if a computer is behind a security firewall or if multiple computers share the same numeric address using a traffic router.

The pop-up messages it sends are much more difficult to trace - and thus block - than e-mail spam, Baldwin said. The software's Web site says the messages are "completely anonymous and virtually untraceable," a claim Baldwin confirms.

Users can disable Messenger through their operating system's control panel, although doing so could interfere with some anti-virus and other applications that send such messages. Kovacs even provides instructions on his Web site.

Kovacs claims his software can send more than 10,000 messages an hour through high-speed cable modems and DSL connections. Using a more expensive T1 line increases the capacity threefold.

Kovacs, who refused to disclose his customers, said he has heard from people wishing to buy the software and well as those wishing to turn off the Messenger functions. Every few days, Kovacs said, an irate caller addresses him "using bad words."

"We just hang up the phone," he said.

Microsoft Pulls Ad After Internet Faux Pas

Microsoft removed a testimonial ad from its Web site Monday after it was discovered that the testimonial took some liberties with the truth.

The anonymous, first-person-style testimonial was written by a "freelance writer" who switched from Apple Computer's AppleWorks mobile operating system to Windows XP. Accompanying the published testimonial is the image of an earnest-looking brunette holding a coffee cup. Posters at Slashdot.org, a technology news and discussion site, noticed that the photo is a Getty Images Inc. stock image.

Microsoft acknowledges that the image isn't of its customer, but says the ad wasn't meant to be misleading. "The story is from a commissioned person who is writing about her real experience. The picture is taken from Getty

Images," a Microsoft spokeswoman says. "Any company uses photo images of people in those types of marketing formats."

By examining other documents at the site, The Associated Press ascertained that the testimonial writer was a woman named Valerie Mallinson who worked for public relations firm Rataushk & Associates Inc. The Microsoft spokeswoman confirmed that the company hired Rataushk to create the ad, but insists that it's an honest testimonial. The woman considers herself a freelance writer and did make the switch from AppleWorks to Windows XP, she says. The claim appears to be backed up by Mallinson, who is quoted by AP as saying she made the switch.

Microsoft felt compelled to remove the controversial ad. "It wasn't the way the Windows product group wanted to communicate Windows XP," the spokeswoman says, adding that the ad was posted by a different group within Microsoft.

World Cybercrime Experts See Need for Laws, Ties

Top international cyber-crimebusters wrapped up a three-day conference in the world's most wired country on Wednesday with a call for greater global cooperation to fight online offences.

Senior cyber-crime police officers from 37 countries agreed at a meeting in South Korea that worldwide investigations were needed to chase online criminals who operate with little regard for state frontiers.

"Cyber crimes are global crimes, using global IT networks," said Des Berwick, an executive officer of the Australasian Center for Policing Research, on the sidelines of the fifth Interpol conference on computer crime.

Interpol -- which promotes international police cooperation and does not deal with crimes involving just one country -- is based in Lyon, France, and has 179 member countries.

It was the first time Interpol had held its computer crimes conference outside its headquarters and it was no coincidence South Korea was chosen as the venue. South Korea has the world's highest number of high-speed broadband Internet users, and has cyber-crime statistics to match.

Interpol has had a unit, the High Tech Crime Unit, in charge of online crimes since 2000.

"A large component of this conference in Interpol activity is the encouragement and establishment of cooperative mechanisms. So you have communication liaison," said Berwick. "They can investigate simultaneously around the world."

A lack of laws covering online crimes has hindered international investigations into the growing number of crimes on the Internet.

About 50-60 countries have their own laws against cyber crimes, but more than 100 countries have no laws on computer offences, said Marc Goodman, a representative of Interpol's U.S. operations.

"Having laws on the book is the first step," said Berwick.

In South Korea, cyber offences, including slandering and financial fraud online, shot up 126 percent to 33,289 cases in 2001 from a year earlier, and totaled 39,482 cases in the first eight months of this year, according to the cyber-crime center under the country's National Police Agency.

The number of cases jumped 43 percent in 2000, with computer-savvy teenagers topping the list of offenders.

Online games added to the number of cyber offences, given recent cases in which some Internet game buffs paid people real money to "kill" their cyber enemies.

"Many Korean citizens are online. The more people you have online, the more cyber crime you are likely to have," said Goodman.

Hacking on computer systems, spreading viruses and cheating online equity investors were among the most frequent Internet crimes in Asia's fourth-biggest economy.

"We must have global cooperation...in investigating, addressing and reducing the risk, and potential for cyber crimes," said Berwick.

Back in 1990, less than 100,000 people were able to log on to the Internet worldwide. Now around 500 million people are hooked up to surf the net around the globe, Goodman said.

'Dot-usa' Internet Name Seller to Refund Fees

A British entrepreneur has agreed to give back \$350,000 to customers who bought Internet domain names with a ".usa" suffix that did not work on most computers, parties to the deal said Thursday.

U.K. resident Thomas Goolnik agreed to the refund as part of a settlement with the U.S. Federal Trade Commission, which earlier this year filed a deceptive-advertising suit that shut down his business.

Goolnik offered domain names such as "www.surfin.usa" through an aggressive junk e-mail campaign, but failed to disclose that the star-spangled Web sites and e-mail addresses would not work without special software, the FTC charged.

After months of negotiations, the two sides reached a settlement on Tuesday which requires Goolnik to refund his proceeds and agree not to make further misrepresentations.

"We're more than satisfied with the settlement and the way it protects consumers," said FTC attorney Steve Wernikoff, who handled the case.

Goolnik did not admit or deny guilt as part of the settlement and insisted that he had done nothing wrong. A separate U.K. investigation failed to find any evidence of fraud, he said, and very few customers have asked for their money back.

"The domains do work and are not bogus or worthless," Goolnik told Reuters.

Unlike .com, .org and other established domains, .usa Web sites and e-mail

addresses have not been approved by the standards-setting Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers.

Like other "alternative root" domains that operate outside of the ICANN-sanctioned domain-name system, ".usa" addresses can only be reached by users who download a special software patch for their browsers.

The .usa domain also bears similarities to the United States' .us domain, a recognized "country code" managed by Washington-based NeuStar Inc.

Goolnik said he was willing to go to trial to defend his practices, but was advised by his lawyers to settle the case and move on.

Wernikoff said Goolnik could have backed out of the agreement - initially proposed in June - if he was unsatisfied.

"There are many ways for him to tell us he wanted out of that deal," he said.

Goolnik said he has sold roughly 6,000 of the patriotic names at \$59 each. He had also offered other unsanctioned names such as .brit, .scot, .sex and .god, but said he was unsure if he would get back in the business of selling alternative domains.

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